

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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E.O,011652: N/A
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SUBJ: RAID ON SAUDI ARABIAN BECHTEL OFFICES IN JUBAIL

REF: (A) DHAHRAN 0886, (B) RIYADH 0397, (C) DHAHRAN 0788,

1. CONGEN WAS INFORMED 18 JULY THAT A DELEGATION OF SAUDI OFFICIALS INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LABOR MINISTRY, LOCAL POLICE, EMIRATE OFFICIALS AND THE PASSPORT OFFICE, HAD RAIDED THE JUBAIL OFFICES OF BECHTEL COMPANY A FEW HOURS BEFORE. IN AN EXTREMELY ABRUPT MANNER THESE OFFICIALS DEMANDED TO SEE ALL PASSPORTS OF EXPATRIATE WORKERS ON FILE WITH THE COMPANY AND WHEN THESE FILES WERE POINTED OUT, PROCEEDED TO RIFLE THROUGH FILE DRAWERS THEMSELVES. APPARENTLY THIS INCIDENT WAS TOUCHED OFF BY THE DISCOVERY EARLIER IN THE DAY OF TWO WOMEN SECRETARIES WORKING IN THE JUBAIL PERSONNEL OFFICE. AS REPORTED IN REFTEL (A) BECHTEL HAS ALREADY TERMINATED ALL WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN THEIR OFFICES IN AL-KHOBAR AND DAMMAM. HOWEVER, AT THE SITE OF BEXYTEL'S MAIN MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR CONTRACT IN JUBAIL, THE COMPANY HAD NOT YET
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TAKEN SUCH ACTION BECAUSE OF THE UNACCEPTABLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THIS HUGE PROJECT SUCH ACTION WOULD HAVE. SAG OFFICIALS PICKED OUT AT RANDOM SEVERAL PASSPORTS OF FEMALE DEPENDENTS AND ACCUSED THE BECHTEL COMPANY OFFICER PRESENT OF ILLEGALLY EMPLOYING THEM. WHEN THE COMPANY OFFICIALS' EXPLANATION THAT THESE WOMEN WERE EMPLOYED DEPENDENTS WAS CUT SHORT, HE, THE OFFICIAL, CALLED IN THE

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION FOR JUBAIL, THE SAG AGENCY OVERSEEING THE PROJECT. AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE, SAG AUTHORITIES PRESENT WERE PERSUADED TO LEAVE THE COMPANY'S OFFICES. BEFORE LEAVING, HOWEVER, A LIST OF DEMANDS IN ARABIC WERE SUBMITTED TO BECHTEL OFFICIALS INCLUDING A DEMAND FOR THE IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OF ALL WOMEN EMPLOYEES AND AN ORDER THAT ALL OF THE PASSPORTS OF THE COMPANY EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS BE SUBMITTED TO LOCAL PASSPORT OFFICE FOR "VERIFICATION" OF LABOR AND RESIDENCE PERMITS.

2. AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF LOCAL SAG AUTHORITIES, THE ROYAL COMMISSION LIASON MAN ADVISED BECHTEL OFFICIALS TO GET INTO IMMEDIATE CONTACT WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMPANY IN THE U.S. HE STATED, THE BECHTEL PRESIDENT MUST USE HIS INFLUENCE WITH ROYAL FAMILY MEMBERS AND MINISTERS TO COOL THE ARDOR OF LOCAL OFFICIALS IN INFORCING SAG'S NEW DECREE AGAINST WOMEN WORKING. BOTH THE ROYAL COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE AND LOCAL BECHTEL OFFICIALS AGREED THAT THE TERMINATION OF NEARLY ALL THEIR SUPPORTING ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLERICAL STAFF WOULD HAVE A DRASTIC AND DISASTROUS EFFECT ON THE HUGE JUBAIL PROJECT.
COMMENT: INEXPLICABLY BECHTEL CONTINUES TO BE SINGLED OUT FOR ESPECIALLY HARSH ENFORCEMENT OF THE NEW DECREE AGAINST WOMEN WORKING. BOTH THE COORDINATION AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORCEFULNESS OF LOCAL SAG OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THIS RAID SUGGEST THAT THEY HAVE AT LEAST RECEIVED THE MANDATE OF JUBAIL'S EMIR AND PERHAPS THAT OF THE EASTERN PROVINCE EMIR FOR THEIR ACTIONS. AS NORTHRUP CORP. HAS ALREADY RECEIVED THE GUARANTEE OF ROYAL PROTECTION FROM SUCH RAIDS AND HAS NOT BEEN APPROACHED ON THE SUBJECT, THE SUGGESTION OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE, THAT BECHTEL DO THE SAME, APPEARS THE COMPANY'S ONLY REAL DEFENSE AGAINST THESE HEAVY, NEW PRESSURES TO COMPLY WITH THE NEW DECREE. CONGEN CANNOT AT THIS POINT OFFER ANY REAL ADVICE TO BECHTEL ON THE SUBJECT EXCEPT TO SEEK THE SPECIAL PROTECTION OUTLINED ABOVE. CONGEN REQUESTS FURTHER GUIDANCE ON PROPER RESPONSE TO CONCERNED FIRMS AND CITIZENS ON SUBJECT OF ENFORCEMENT OF NEW DECREE.
MEYERS

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